

ADA POLICY UPDATE

Texoma Area Paratransit System
(TAPS)

Americans With Disabilities Policy

July 2019

Texoma Area Paratransit System

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT POLICY STATEMENT

July 30, 2019

Introduction

Texoma Area Paratransit System (TAPS) transportation services were developed to provide safe and efficient transportation to the general public and to persons with special needs as specified by Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and as defined by contracts into which Texoma Area Paratransit System may enter from time to time.

Goal

It is the goal of Texoma Area Paratransit System transportation services to implement and maintain an efficient and effective transportation system to serve the general public.

Objectives

The specific objectives of Texoma Area Paratransit System transportation services are:

1. To provide transportation designed to accommodate the general public and persons with disabilities, and
2. To maintain a trained staff for the operation and control of the system.

Policy

It is the policy of Texoma Area Paratransit System that no otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subject to discrimination under any program or activity undertaken by Texoma Area Paratransit System. Texoma Area Paratransit System serves person without regard to race, sex, religion or national origin.

General Procedures

All publicized services will be made in accessible formats (i.e., large print, TDD, Braille, audio tape) “upon request”

Reservations

To arrange a ride, customers need to call Texoma Area Paratransit System (TAPS) at (844) 603-6048. Please be prepared to provide your name, the addresses of the pick-up and drop-off points, your arrival and departure times, and any special accommodations you may need.

Customers are required to telephone TAPS to reserve a ride at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the desired trip. Reservations are accepted from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily, Monday through Friday. If a return ride is required, it should be scheduled at that same time. If scheduling permits, TAPS may accommodate customers on shorter notice.

Scheduling Tips

Many factors can affect your travel plans. Weather can affect traffic conditions and slow service. Medical appointments, for example, are often delayed, so it is better to overestimate rather than under estimate your travel and appointment times. Please take into account any conditions that may affect your pick-up and drop-off times.

Customer Responsibilities

Customers are expected to be ready and waiting just inside the entrance door or other pre-arranged location at the agreed upon time. Customers finding that they will be unable to meet the TAPS driver at the location or time schedule are expected to call TAPS and advise them as soon as possible. In the event that TAPS is unable to meet the customer at the agreed upon time, TAPS will make every effort to alert the customer of this change.

Cancellations Policy

Late cancellation and no shows reduce TAPS service efficiency and effectiveness. A trip reservation that is not used prevents someone else from potentially taking a trip and waste TAPS limited resources. Individuals with a demonstrated pattern of no-shows or late cancellations (as defined above) is seriously disruptive to TAPS service. For the purpose of this policy and the administration of service restrictions, only documented late cancellation and no shows that are within the control of the customer will be considered. Instances where trips are cancelled or the customers no shows that are not within the customers control will not be considered when service restrictions are being imposed.

Three or more no-shows in any 30-day period will prompt a review. Based on the findings of the review, the following steps will be followed:

- **First** suspension occurrence will result in a 7-day suspension penalty.
- **Second** suspension occurrence will result in a 14-day suspension penalty.
- **Third** suspension occurrence will result in a 30 -day suspension penalty.

The timeframe for the progressive restriction policy is based on a rolling 12-month period.

Passenger Wheelchairs and Other Mobility Aids

TAPS carries all wheelchair and occupant if the lift and vehicle can physically accommodate the, unless doing so is inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements.

“Legitimate safety requirements” includes such circumstances as a wheelchair of such size that it would block an aisle or would be too large to fully enter a vehicle would block the vestibule or would interfere with the safe evacuation of passengers in an emergency.

Wheelchairs are defined to include 3-wheeled or more mobility aids.

TAPS reserves the right to deny service if the situation is determined to be unsafe for the passenger and/or the driver. TAPS allows customers to travel with portable oxygen and other life support equipment.

TAPS may require a customer to supply his or her own Personal Care Attendant (PCA).

The following conditions generally warrant a PCA.

Immobility

If the customer is incapable of self-mobility, or if self-mobility is possible but risk of falling or physical injury exists, and the assistance of a PCA would provide mobility or lessen the danger of injury, then the customer’s attendant may accompany the customer at no cost.

Disorientation

If the customer, due to a visual or mental impairment, is unable to properly orient him/herself and navigate to reach a destination, and the assistance of a PCA is required, the customer’s attendant may ride at no cost.

Non-Comprehension

If the customer, due to mental impairment, is unable to adequately perform those mental processes necessary to handle common occurrences or is unable to effectively control his/her own actions, and the assistance of a PCA is required, then the customer’s attendant may ride free.

Communication Impairment

If the customer is unable to effectively transmit or receive communications due to sensory or mental problems, and if these problems would prevent the customer from using the service, the customer’s attendant may ride free.

Personal Care Attendant (PCA)

Attendants are required to specifically assist the customer, including, but not limited to, the following duties:

- Assisting the customer from his/her door to the bus and back again
- Opening doors

- Pushing wheelchairs

Carrying packages

- Communication with the driver (if customer is unable)

If a PCA does not specifically perform some type of assistance for the customer, that person is considered a guest and is charged full fare.

In addition to physician-related PCAs, attendants will be required to accompany under the following circumstances:

- Customers unable to orient him/herself and navigate to reach a destination
- Customers unable to effectively control his/her own actions
- Customers who will not remain seated and belted
- Customers using non-conventional wheelchairs and who are unable to independently transfer
- Children under seven (7) years of age, and
- Others, as required by the Transportation Coordinator

Animals

Texoma Area Paratransit System allows customers to travel with animals trained to assist them. All animals, with exception of animals that are required to aid the customer (e.g., seeing-eye dog), must be contained in an approved pet travel kennel. The animal must remain restrained in the kennel throughout the trip.

Customer Behavior

To assure the safety and comfort of all customers and the driver, the following activities are prohibited on all vehicles and persons who engage in these activities may be refused service:

- Smoking
- Eating and drinking
- Playing personal radios
- Consuming alcoholic beverages using illegal drugs
- Using obscene or abusive language
- Behaving in ways that are violent or seriously disruptive
- Shoving, pushing, or behaving in a disorderly manner
- Causing damage to the vehicle

Driver Assistance

Texoma Area Paratransit System drivers will assist customers when boarding and exiting the vehicle. Drivers will secure wheelchairs, assist with seat belts, small parcels, and up to three bags of groceries. Drivers are not permitted to carry groceries or parcels up and down stairs or steps, enter homes, or accept gifts or tips.

Reasonable modification

Texoma Area Paratransit System provides demand response service with a curb to curb policy as well a no back policy, however TAPS will make reasonable modifications of its policy upon request from individuals that would otherwise be unable to use the service. Reasonable modifications will be denied based on the following.

The request will:

- a. Fundamentally alter the nature of the entity's transit service
- b. Create a direct threat to the health or safety of others
- c. Without the requested modification, the individual with a disability is able to fully use the transit agency's services, program or activities for their intended purpose
- d. Granting the request would cause an undue financial or administrative burden

If there are any questions regarding this policy, please contact Shellie Cherry at 903-487-019